

MINUTES

MANSFIELD ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN

Wednesday, June 6, 2007

Mansfield Town Hall, Council Chambers

Pot Luck

6:30-8:30 PM

PRESENT: K. Grunwald (staff), J. Stoughton (staff), J. Buck, J. Goldman, S. Baxter (staff), A. Bladen (Chair), K. Paulhus, N. Hovorka, Jackie Soroka (guest)

REGRETS: M.J.

Newman, B. Lehmann, A. Bloom, B. Maines, D. McLaughlin, and L. Oransoff

- I. INTRODUCTIONS/MINUTES: Potluck Supper**
 - A. Introductions: MAC Council member Katherine Paulhus becomes Mansfield Board of Ed. Member, and was congratulated by the membership. New potential member Jackie Soroka was introduced to members.**
 - B. Thank you: Joan Buck was recognized for her seven years of dedicated service to the young children of Mansfield. Thank you to Lisa Oransoff's daughter Ariana for helping with childcare at the May 8th Mansfield annual budget meeting.**
 - C. Adoption of minutes of May 2, 2007: the minutes of the May 2 meeting were accepted with minor corrections. J. Goldman noted that J. Buck and B. Lehmann had letters to the editor published about early care and education in April during the Month of the Young Child. She also felt that there needed to be more description about the Denise Merrill event. This will be added as an attachment and included in next Month's minutes. S. Baxter noted that the minutes that were mailed out were incomplete.**
- II. COMMUNICATIONS (Consent Agenda, unless otherwise noted)**
 - A. "A Preschool Payback, Educating a highly trained work force starts early"**
 - B. Bio for Anne Bladen**

III. NEW BUSINESS: _

- A. Full Day Kindergarten Update from BOE meeting on 5/10/07: S. Baxter reported on the Principals' presentation to the BOE. A list of enrollment figures was distributed for the past two years and this coming year. Teachers report that they feel that the program is working well; more time for a balanced curriculum and extended activities. First grade teachers report a smoother transition for children. Some parents of children in the half-day program would like to see a later dismissal time. A survey was done of parents, and overall they presented satisfaction with the kindergarten program. K. Paulhus reported that some parents had attended the previous BOE meeting and complained that they do not feel that they have been "embraced" by the administration and the Board. J. Goldman suggested that MAC could recommend a policy or procedure for transitioning from half-day to full day.**
- B. By-Laws Ad Hoc Committee Update: J. Stoughton presented a draft of bylaws that were developed by this sub-committee. Bylaws from other communities were used as a model. Prior to the August meeting members are asked to review the bylaws for adoption. In Article III, #4 it was asked whether or not membership on MAC should be limited to a certain percentage from a specific organization. Section 3, #1 defines a quorum, and this needs to be consistent with references to the bylaws in other sections. Any questions or comments should be noted and will be addressed at the next meeting. J. Goldman suggested that we return to the Mission Statement of MAC and that this should be reflected in the Purposes and Goals of MAC. She expressed strong feelings that the primary purpose of MAC is to advocate for children. Look at possibly creating a new article entitled "Responsibilities" that would cover tasks related to grant monitoring and school readiness compliance. K. Paulhus felt that Public Act 97-259 should be attached, and also asked a question Article IX, Conflict of Interest. It was clarified that this broadly refers to any potential conflict of interest for members. The committee will be meeting again prior to our next meeting and will attempt to incorporate this feedback.**
- C. Other: J. Goldman reported on the work of the university's work-life committee; they are looking at opportunities to**

get information about programs and services out to graduate students. There is an orientation for international students where space can be provided to hand out information. The work-life coordinator's position is still in the plans, but no moves have been made to hire this position. There are personal service agreements providing funding to MDD, Willow House, and CCC. She also reported on a group in New Haven to provide mentorship to non-licensed family care providers: "All Our Kin."

IV. PROGRAM UPDATES:

- A. School Readiness Update:** S. Baxter reported that the application for the next year has been submitted. The numbers for full time and part-time spaces need to be clarified. We have been informed that the School Readiness Committee needs to have Co-Chairs appointed by the Mayor and Superintendent. K. Grunwald and R. Leclerc have agreed to serve in this capacity. This is a requirement of the school readiness grant.
- B. Discovery Update**
- **MAC Retreat** (this was not done in last meeting): the minutes of the May meeting reflect the outcomes of the retreat regarding the formation of sub-committees. J. Buck asked if this should be reflected in the bylaws. This is covered in Article VI; Committees.
 - **Reports on two Graustein workshops/meetings of 5/18/07 and 5/22/07:** S. Baxter asked members to look at the Action Plan for each meeting to ensure that we are following the plan. S. Baxter, J. Goldman and A. Bladen attended a meeting on putting together a community strategic plan. J. Goldman reported that we would be working on a broader community plan. S. Baxter handed out instructions for how communities get to that point. We need to meet with representatives of Graustein to review the application process for 2008.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

- A. MAC Calendar – New Calendar for 2007-08 will be emailed**

VI. NEXT MEETING: August 1, 2007

- Meetings are held from 6:30- 7:30 PM at a location to be determined. Smaller committee meetings may be scheduled after the general meeting if members have planned that. Additional meetings may be scheduled as needed, or removed as not needed.

VII. Adjournment: the meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Grunwald